

JUSTICE NEWS

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Statement by Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch on the Agreement in Principle with BP to Settle Civil Claims for the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

Total Value of Settlement Would Top \$18.7 Billion, the Largest Settlement with a Single Entity in American History

Today, BP disclosed that it has reached agreements in principle with the United States, state, and local governments for a settlement of civil claims arising from the April 20, 2010, Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The Attorney General made the following statement:

“Since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill – the largest environmental disaster in our nation’s history – the Justice Department has been fully committed to holding BP accountable, to achieving justice for the American people and to restoring the environment and the economy of the Gulf region at the expense of those responsible and not the American taxpayer. In December 2010, my predecessor, Attorney General Eric Holder, announced a civil lawsuit against BP and its co-defendants. Since that time, the Deepwater trial team has fought aggressively in federal court for an outcome that would achieve this mission, proving along the way that BP’s gross negligence resulted in the Deepwater disaster.

“Today, I am pleased to say that after productive discussions with BP over the previous several weeks, we have reached an agreement in principle that would justly and comprehensively address outstanding federal and state claims, including Clean Water Act civil penalties and natural resource damages. BP is also resolving significant economic claims with the impacted state and local governments. We will work diligently during the next several months to incorporate the agreement in principle into a consent decree, which would then undergo public comment before court approval. If approved by the court, this settlement would be the largest settlement with a single entity in American history; it would help repair the damage done to the Gulf economy, fisheries, wetlands and wildlife; and it would bring lasting benefits to the Gulf region for generations to come.

“I am so very grateful to the Deepwater civil trial team, made up of men and women from the department’s Environment and Natural Resources Division and Civil Division, as well as the incredible response, investigative and supporting efforts of the Departments of Homeland Security, Interior, Commerce and Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency, whose efforts have made this important step possible. I also appreciate the extraordinary effort of the many state leaders and environmental professionals who collaborated to advance this agreement in principle.”

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Environmental Crimes

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